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AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 937th Engineer Group (Combat)
APO 96318

EGC-OP

31 October 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65), for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967

THRU: Commanding General
18th Engineer Brigade
APO 96377

Commanding General
U.S. Army Engineer Command Vietnam (Prov)
ATTN: AVCC-P&O
APO 96491

Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
ATTN: AVHGC-DH
APO 96375

Commander in Chief
United States Army, Pacific
ATTN: GPOP-OT
APO 96588

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army (ACSFOR DA)
Washington, D.C. 20310

Section 1, Significant Unit Activities

1. Command:

a. Mission:

To command assigned or attached units.

To plan and coordinate the operations of the units assigned or

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attached to the Group.

To provide all non-divisional engineer support required for tactical operations in the Group area of responsibility. (See Incl 1, 937th Engr Gp (C) Area of Responsibility)

To serve as construction agency for all Army troop labor construction projects to include cantonment, airfield, logistic and line of communication construction in the Group area of responsibility.

To act as focal point of contact for and maintain liaison with Resident Officer in Charge of Construction and to provide a Contracting Officer Representative on Army Contracts for which responsibility has been assigned to the Group.

b. Organization:

To accomplish this mission the following units were assigned or attached to the Group during the reporting period.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TOE</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
20th Engr Bn (C)	5-35D	None
70th Engr Bn (C)	5-35D	None
299th Engr Bn (C)	5-35D	None
815th Engr Bn (Const)	5-116E	None
Co B, 84th Engr Bn (Const)	5-118D	Reassigned to 45th Gp, 18th Bde GO 274 eff 10 Oct 67.
102d Engr Co (CS)	5-114D	Minus 1 plt atch 35th Gp
509th Engr Co (PB)	5-77E	Minus 1 plt atch 45th Gp
511th Engr Co (PB)	5-77E	Reassigned to 45th Gp, 18th Bde GO 275 eff 10 Oct 67
584th Engr Co (LE)	5-54D	None
585th Engr Co (DT)	5-124D	None
630th Engr Co (LE)	5-54D	None
Two Plts, 554th Engr Co (PB)	5-78E	Atch 509th Engr Co (PB)
444th Engr Det (HO)	5-500	Reassigned to 45th Gp, 18th Bde GO 275 eff 10 Oct 67

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TOE</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
643d Engr Co (PL)	5-177E	Minus 1 plt atch 45th Gp and 1 plt atch 159th Gp
49th Engr Det (WD)	5-500	None
15th Engr Co (LE)	5-54D	None
35th Land Clearing Platoon		Atch to 20th Engr Bn (C), 937th GO 31 eff 25 Aug 67

A chart showing the organizational structure of the Group is attached as Incl 2.

c. Command Relationships:

The 937th Engineer Group (Combat) is attached to the 18th Engineer Brigade and has a conventional relationship with its parent unit with the exception that the Group responds directly to First Field Force, Vietnam (IFFORCEV) requests for operational support missions. This arrangement is in accordance with long-standing instruction of the CG, 18th Engr Bde, to insure timely response to operational support requirements of the combat forces in the II Corps Tactical Zone.

2. Personnel, Administration, Morale, and Discipline:

a. Personnel:

(1) The average present for duty strength of the Group during the reporting period ranged between 92 and 96 percent with an overall average of 94 percent. While the average present for duty strength was lower than the previous quarter, no shortages considered detrimental to the mission of the Group were involved. Most of the shortages were in the engineer and ordnance equipment repair military occupational specialties. These were generally the same MOS shortages as in the previous quarter. The OJT program continued to provide specialized MOS's which were in short supply within the Group by training and promoting from basic entry MOS's. The Group received approximately 733 replacements during the period, a large portion of whom were basic engineer replacements. On 10 October 1967 the Group lost three small units: the 444th Engineer Detachment (HO), B Company of the 84th Engineer Battalion (Const), and the 511th Engineer Company (PB), authorized a total of 354 people. During this period the Group formed a provisional security platoon composed of other elements within the Group. The total authorized provisional strength of this platoon is 57 individuals.

(2) Officers: The present for duty strength for officers ranged from 86 to 92 per cent with an overall average of 89 per cent. No significant shortages existed in engineer officer military occupational specialties but the Aviation Section of the Group Headquarters is still critically short of rotary wing aviators and helicopter pilots. At the end of the reporting period, all companies of the Group were commanded by either captains or senior first lieutenants who have demonstrated their command ability by previous troop duty as

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platoon leaders.

(3) Senior NCO's (E-7 through E-9): The present for duty strength for senior non-commissioned officers ranged from 85 to 90 per cent with an overall average strength for the period of 87 per cent. No shortages considered to be critical have existed during the reporting period.

(4) Enlisted Grades (E-1 through E-6): The enlisted present for duty strength ranged from 90 to 91 percent with an overall average of 90.5 per cent. This general lowering of Group strength is accounted for by the continuation of a trend occurring during the previous quarter when the number of CONUS returnees generally exceeded the number of replacements received. At the end of the reporting period the trend had been reversed with replacements generally more numerous than CONUS returnees.

(5) Rotational Humps: On 10 October, USARV announced that organizations with more than one-year in country which had more than 15 per cent of their personnel scheduled to rotate during any one month or units with less than one year in country which had more than 25 per cent of their personnel scheduled to rotate during any one month would be forcibly infused with personnel by USARV Headquarters to reduce their monthly rotational hump below these two critical levels. This organization was faced with the requirement to infuse several of its units. Although several units within the Group reported more than 15 per cent of their authorized enlisted strength rotating in certain months, almost all of these humps have been resolved by reallocation of in-Group resources. Exceptions were the 299th and 70th Engineer Battalions (Combat) both of which had rotational humps of more than 15 per cent per cent in February, and the 815th Engineer Battalion (Construction) which was scheduled to experience a rotational hump of approximately 65 per cent during the month of March. Efforts to infuse by reassignment of personnel between the 937th Engineer Group (Combat) elements and the 4th Engineer Battalion were only partially successful. The large hump in the 815th Engineer Battalion resulting from the departure of the entire Battalion from the United States on 24 March 1967, presented a peculiar problem in that the construction engineer MOS's of the 815th were not compatible with the military occupational specialties in any of the other battalions of the Group. While officers could be reassigned to resolve the officer rotational hump, the enlisted hump was reported to higher headquarters for resolution. All rotational humps of officers within units of the Group were resolved by planned reallocation of officers between subordinate units. The actual reassignment of individuals is scheduled to take place during the months of November and December 1967.

b. Morale and Discipline:

(1) Morale continued to run high in all units during the reporting period. A slight decline in morale evidenced by increased numbers of personnel problems and apparently due to the uncomfortable conditions of the monsoon season, was more than offset by a rise in morale as the monsoon abated and working conditions for all units generally improved. The 70th Engineer Battalion

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moved from comfortable quarters in An Khe to the austere conditions of a temporary camp at Pleiku without any decline in the morale of the unit. This high state of morale is due basically to a genuine concern of all leaders for the welfare of their subordinates and the interesting, challenging, and professionally rewarding opportunities for military engineering in the Central Highlands area. Also important is the evidence of a realization and appreciation of the importance of the soldier's task and his mission in Vietnam. An increased awareness of this mission was evidenced during the election periods in the Central Highlands.

(2) The mission of the Group continues to require a 7-day work week with 10 hours or more of Engineer construction or support during the day and considerable work at night. Recreation and welfare programs continue to receive command attention and have recently increased in diversity and in scope. All units in the base camps show movies an average of 6 nights per week and post exchange facilities are steadily improving. With the consolidation of the 937th Engr Gp in the Pleiku area, the coordination between organizations and pooling of recreational facilities did much to improve the availability of recreational opportunities. Unit EM, Officer, and NCO Clubs are operational in the base camps and profits are used for improvement of facilities and for occasional professional entertainment. The number of professional shows increased slightly from the last reporting period and were in all cases well received. Furniture, games, and sports equipment continue to be readily available from special services and are widely used. The end of the monsoon season provided increased opportunity for visiting of the surrounding area, trips to Pleiku, and various outings to the Lake Bion Hoa recreational area and surrounding environs.

(3) The R & R program received wide spread attention during this period. A slight shortage of available spaces during the period caused increased command concern and additional emphasis on utilization of all allocations and reduction of "turnbacks". Although not all individuals can obtain "first choice" booking, flights to all R & R sites are extremely popular. The opening of an R & R site in Sidney, Australia in the first part of October, was well received. The enthusiastic welcome of the Australian people and the many unique opportunities for rest and relaxation in this modern city were widely reported and enthusiastically indorsed by those returning. Flights to Hawaii continue to be most popular with married NCO's and officers.

(4) Both Protestant and Catholic Chaplains are available to all units within the Group and all denominations are represented in each unit area by chaplains from this and other organizations who assist each other on an area basis. A civilian chaplain in the Kontum area assists the US chaplains by providing Catholic services for troops in that area. The religious program has received widespread command attention and religious services and character guidance classes on a regularly scheduled basis are available to all personnel. Unit chaplains spend many hours in individual counsel and visits to hospitalized personnel.

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3. Intelligence and Counterintelligence:

a. Safeguarding Defense Information:

Continued emphasis was placed on the employment of proper procedures for handling classified documents. All newly assigned personnel and those departing for R&R received a briefing on the contents of pertinent security regulations and the Subversion and Espionage Directed Against U.S. Army (SAEDA) program.

b. Physical Security:

In July, the base camp defensive system was established as 24 perimeter bunkers and 8 bunker/tower facilities. In August, the main body of the 167th Signal Company moved into the cantonment area. In early October, the 70th Engineer Battalion (Combat) with its attached 630th Engineer Company (LE) relocated from An Khe to Engineer Hill. This increase necessitated an enlargement of the defensive perimeter which now stands at 28 bunkers and 10 bunker/towers, requiring a guard force of 114 personnel each night.

The defensive position was further strengthened by the employment of 185 claymore mines, permanently emplaced in concrete around the defensive perimeter.

Long range patrols have been initiated and operate out to distances of 10,000 meters from the Base Camp. Visual reconnaissance flights by helicopter are conducted daily. The active and passive defense capability of the 20th and 299th Engineer Battalions (C) remain essentially as reported during the last period. The 815th Engineer Battalion (Const) continues to provide a 63 man force for security of the Connell Quarry complex located east of Pleiku. The 70th Engineer Battalion (C) provides daytime security at Waterman Quarry located northeast of Engineer Hill.

c. Reconnaissance:

Major Tactical Operations in Pleiku and Kontum Provinces provided adequate security to allow reconnaissance teams to obtain information on several routes in the Group area of operation. The 20th Engineer Battalion (C) conducted Route Reconnaissance on Rte 6C from RJ 6C-QL-14 to Plei Me; on Rte 7B from RJ QL-14 to Cheo Reo; on R-14 from AR 761320 to AQ 974600; on QL-14 from AR 774368 to RJ 50. The 299th Engineer Battalion (C) conducted Route Reconnaissance of Rt 511 from Kontum to Krong Poko River. A work estimate was made for Rte 5B (Walking Recon) and a bridge updating completed on Rte QL-19 from AR 779464 to BR 216524. Bridge reconnaissance was conducted on QL-14 from ZA 240498 to ZB 156054.

d. Intelligence:

Daily Intelligence Summaries (INTSUMS) were received from all

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major tactical units within the Group area of operation. Receipt of there INTSUMS, in addition to regular contacts with Intelligence gathering units located in the Pleiku area, provided current information on every activity in the Group area.

4. Plans, Operations and Training:

a. General:

During this reporting period a significant change was made in the organization and area of responsibility (AOR) of the 937th Engr Gp (C).

On 10 Oct the Group eastern boundary was shifted by direction of 18th Engr Bde. This boundary now coincides with the eastern boundaries of Kontum, Pleiku and Phu Bon provinces. The Group was relieved of responsibility for approximately one third of Binh Dinh province, which included engineer support for the 1st Cav Div (AM) at An Khe, and was given the remaining portion of Phu Bon province not previously in the Group AOR.

Concurrent with the change in group boundaries there was also a change in location and assignment of Group units. The 70th Engr Bn (C) with its attached 630th Engr Co (LE) relocated from An Khe to the base camp of Group Headquarters at Engineer Hill, Pleiku, during the period 1 - 10 October. The 511 Engr Co (PB), Company B, 84th Engr Bn (Const) and 444th Engr Det (HO), which were previously attached to the 70th Engr Bn (C) remained at An Khe and were re-assigned to the 45th Engr Gp effective 10 Oct.

At the close of the previous reporting period two new units had been assigned to the Group. The 15th Engr Co (LE), which arrived in Pleiku on 24 July and was attached to the 299th Engr Bn (C), received its equipment during the first week of August. The 643rd Engr Co (PL) (-), consisting of the company headquarters and one line platoon, arrived at Pleiku on 13 Aug. This unit was also further attached to the 299th Engr Bn (C).

Present Group boundaries and assignment of units are outlined in inclosures 1 and 2 respectively of this report.

The southwest monsoon, which commenced in June, continued to hamper the Group's horizontal construction effort until mid-October. Maintenance of Lines of Communications (LOC) and forward airfields, particularly those covered with T-17 membrane, presented the major problems during the rainy season. Aggressive action by Group subordinate units resulted in few occasions when roads or airfields were closed to traffic.

With the end of the monsoon season the division of available resources among MCA construction tasks, operational support missions and LOC work changed considerably. At the beginning of this reporting period MCA construction tasks accounted for approximately 60 per cent of the Group's effort. This reporting period ended with 15 per cent of the Group's effort being expended on MCA construction and the remainder on operational support and LOC work.

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b. Operational Support:

(1) Operation FRANCIS MARION

The 937th Engr Gp (C) and specifically the 20th Engr Bn (C) continued to provide general support to the 4th Inf Div's Operation FRANCIS MARION conducted in western Pleiku and Kontum and northern Darlac provinces. At the beginning of this reporting period Co B, 20th Engr Bn (C) (-) was at Ban Blech repairing the T-17 membrane surface and subgrade which was damaged by heavy rains. This unit also improved the access road leading from QL-14 to the airfield by extensive grading and ditching. Improvements were also made to the crossing over a destroyed bridge on QL-14 at AQ 974600. Repairs and improvements were completed on 4 September and the unit returned to its base camp at Camp Enari the following day. On 4 September B/20 sent one squad to Phu Tuo to repair several tears in T-17 membrane covering the airfield. This project was completed on 5 September.

Co A, 20th Engr Bn (C) performed continual maintenance and conducted daily mine sweeps on route 14B - 509 to Polei Djereng. Co C, 20th Engr Bn performed a similar daily mission on QL-19W in addition to constructing five AVLB bypasses at stream crossings on QL-19W. Chinook revetments were constructed at Jackson Hole (YB 898315) and Oasis Airfield by A/20 and C/20 respectively.

During the early morning hours of 30 July the concrete bridge on QL-19W, Bridge 19-37 (ZA 099299) was destroyed by enemy demolitions. The 509th Engr Co (PB), assisted by C/20, constructed a 120' DD bailey bridge at the same site. The bridge was completed on 31 July. On 4 Aug the Bailey bridge collapsed under the combined weight of a tank retriever pulling a tank. A second 120' DD Bailey was completed by the 509th Engr Co (PB) on 6 Aug. Again, on 15 Sep, the Bailey was collapsed by a tank retriever. Construction of a third 120' DD Bailey was completed on 17 Sep. On 15 Aug the propwash of a CH-47 "Chinook" hovering near the west end of the MX-19 covered runway at Polei Djereng Airfield lifted and separated approximately 800 linear feet of runway because this airfield had not been anchored at its edges due to the non-availability of MX-19 anchorage devices. Two platoons of B/20 were immediately moved to Polei Djereng and completed repairs to the west end at 1800 hours 17 Aug. However, just prior to completion of the west end, another Chinook caused approximately 450 linear feet of similar damage on the east end of the runway. This portion of the runway was repaired by 18 Aug. B/20 remained at the airfield and completely anchored the MX-19 runway, using field expedient anchors, by 19 Aug. On 11 Sep C/20 started placing field expedient anchors on the MX-19 runway at Oasis Airfield. This runway had also been constructed without any anchorage. C/20 finished this project on 21 Sep. That same day D/20 relieved C/20 and assumed responsibility for maintenance of QL-19W.

(2) Operation GREELEY

In addition to providing general support for Operation

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FRANCIS MARION the 937th Engr Gp (C), specifically the 299th Engr Bn (C) supported by the 509th Engr Co (PB), continued to provide general support to the 4th Inf Div and 173rd Abn Bde in Operation GREELEY conducted in northwestern Kontum province.

On 1 August Co B, 299th Engr Bn (C) and Co D, 299th Engr Bn (C) were still located at Dak To Airfield and Kontum respectively. B/299 was responsible for providing engineer support to the 173rd Abn Bde and maintenance of route 512 and Dak To airfield. D/299th continued in its mission of maintaining QL-14 north of Kontum.

During the period 1 - 26 August B/299 constructed 2 CH-47 revetments, 2 UH-1 revetments and 4 fixed wing (FAC) revetments at Dak to Airfield. In addition, B/299 constructed 2 timber trestle bridges on QL-14 and replaced the M4T6 float bridge at Bridge 512-1 (ZB 058223) with a 120' DD Bailey on 11 - 12 August. D/299 replaced 2 timber trestle bridges on QL-14 with culverts in addition to operating a sandpit on the Dak Bla River at Kontum and performing daily maintenance on 13 bridges on QL-14. On 14 - 15 August D/299 repaired 30' of the 90' TS Bailey at Bridge 14-22 (ZB 156054) which had been damaged by enemy demolitions. The Bridge was also lengthened 10 feet.

On 26 - 27 August, B/299 and D/299 realigned with D/299 moving to Dak To Airfield and B/299 moving to Kontum. On 29 August, in preparation for the construction of an airfield west of Dak To, Co C, 299th Engr Bn (C) and the 15 Engr Co (LE) (-) moved from Pleiku to Old Dak To Airfield. These two units supported D/299 at Dak To and on Route 512.

From 29 August until 11 October the 299th Engr Bn (C) continued support of Operation GREELEY at Dak To and Kontum. B/299 constructed 3 new timber trestle bridges on QL-14, one of which replaced an existing 70' DS Bailey, and started construction of a fourth timber trestle. C/299, D/299 and 15th LE continued maintenance of route 512, a major effort due to the heavy monsoon rains of that period, and performed continual repairs to the C-130 airfield at Dak To which started to deteriorate rapidly under the large amount of traffic in support of the operation. One platoon of A/299 moved to Dak To on 14 September and constructed a timber trestle bridge on QL-14 near the intersection of Route 512. This bridge was completed on 20 September and the platoon returned to Pleiku.

(3) Operation MAC ARTHUR

Operation FRANCIS MARION and GREELEY were replaced on 12 October with Operation MAC ARTHUR. The 20th Engr Bn (C) and 299th Engr Bn (C) continued with essentially the same missions they had during Operations FRANCIS MARION and GREELEY. B/299 completed the timber trestle bridge on QL-14 previously started and continued daily maintenance of QL-14 north of Kontum. C/299, D/299, 15 LE and 2 platoons of A/299, which moved back to Dak To in mid-October, continued their support of tactical units at Dak To and maintenance and upgrading of Route 512 from QL-14 west to the Dak Poko River and

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maintenance of Dak To airfield. A/20 and D/20 continued in their missions of road maintenance on QL-19W and Route 14B. B/20 (-) in cooperation and coordination with the 20th ARVN Engr Gp (C) maintained and upgraded Route 7B from the intersection of QL-14 to Cheo Reo during 12 - 20 October. One squad from B/20 conducted extensive repairs to the T-17 membrane covered airfield at Phu Tuc during 14 - 28 October.

The 70th Engr Bn (C) was also given the mission of general support to Operation MAC ARTHUR after its arrival in Pleiku. D/70 assumed maintenance responsibility of QL-19 and A/70 was given the mission of upgrading Route 509 from Pleiku west to the intersection of Route 14B.

At the end of this reporting period these units were still providing general engineer support for Operation MAC ARTHUR.

(4) Land Clearing

In mid-August the 4th Inf Div received the mission from First Field Force (IFFV) to conduct land clearing operations on various roads and trails in the Central Highlands. The 937th Engr Gp (C) was directed to provide the actual land clearing effort with the 4th Inf Div providing support in the form of security and obtaining real estate agreements. The effort required consisted of clearing 100 meters on both sides of designated routes and trails.

On 19 August the 35th Land Clearing Platoon, consisting of 64 men and 30 D7E dozers (with both Rome Plow blades and bull blades), was detached from the 45th Engr Gp (C) and attached to the 937th Engr Gp with further attachment to the 20th Engr Bn (C). The platoon was further divided into three sections containing 10 D7E's each. At various times these three sections have worked independently and have been placed in direct support of the 70th and 299th Engr Bn's for operations in their areas of responsibility.

Land clearing operations completed as of the end of this report included 75% of QL-19 between Pleiku and the An Khe Pass east of An Khe, QL-19 west of Dragon Mountain, 3000 meters of QL-14 south of Dragon Mountain, Route 6C from QL-14 south to Plei Me, 75% of Route 14B and 3000 meters on QL-14 north of Kontum. On 31 October one section was clearing on Route 14B, one on Route 512 west of Dak To and one section was clearing land at the Edap Enang resettlement colony on QL-19W. The 70th Engr Bn (C) was continuing operations on QL-19 east of Pleiku with its organic dozers.

(5) Airfield Construction and Upgrading

At the end of the southwest monsoon season in mid-October three units of the 937th Engr Gp (C) initiated construction of one new airfield and commenced upgrading of two existing airfields.

On 20 October, C/299 started upgrading Route 512 and moving

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west to construct an airfield west of Dak To. On 31 October B/70 moved to Plei Kleng to upgrade the existing T-17 membrane covered airfield. On 25 October one platoon of C/20 moved to Ban Blech in preparation for the upgrading of that T-17 membrane covered airfield.

Activities of these three units will be fully described in the next ORLL.

c. Construction:

The construction effort during the reporting period resulted in the completion of 20 projects. An additional 17 new projects were assigned while 10 were turned over to the 45th Engr Gp. Approximately 40 per cent of the currently 58 assigned projects are under active construction.

AERT Radio Station at Camp Enari progressed from planning stage through completion of the transmitter building and generator shed. Initial construction of both towers has been hampered by material shortages.

Camp Holloway perimeter work continued with the completion of a TOC, placing of 131 light poles and 18,000 feet of wire, and construction of 2 generator sheds. Progress was limited by a shortage of electrical materials.

Construction at the 71st Evacuation Hospital continued with completion of the generator shed and installation of the 500 kw generators. Work on the helipad and interior road paving was initiated while general construction was hampered by a shortage of electrical materials.

An Khe - Pleiku Pipeline reached the 75% completion point with construction on both the pipeline and pump station facilities continuing satisfactorily.

Primary emphasis on construction of the 50 MBBL Tank Farm, which was initiated just prior to the beginning of this reporting period, has resulted in nearly 100% completion on three tanks with tanks #4 and #5, 10% and 5% complete respectively.

Earth moving, final grading, treating with MC 70 and placing M8A1 matting has brought the Christmas Tree Heliport to the 85% complete mark.

10 September marked the completion of the An Khe Airfield. The strip was opened to traffic on 28 Sept.

The first building of the 81,650 square feet of aircraft maintenance hangars being erected at Camp Enari is 70% complete. An EDC of 15 November is expected.

80,000 square feet of cantonment facilities were completed at Camp Enari during the reporting period. Construction continued at the Northeast

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Pleiku cantonment area, but construction at other Pleiku cantonments ceased by order of USAFV(P), pending reevaluation of requirements.

Roads and hardstands, and installation storage warehouses at the Pleiku Log Depot are nearing the 60% completion point. Material shortages for the interim reefer complex have held completion throughout the reporting period at 61%. The DS maintenance area has progressed satisfactorily from 50% to 76% complete.

d. LOC Upgrading and Maintenance:

In addition to construction and operational support projects, Group units expended considerable effort on upgrading and maintaining various highways and roads.

National Route 19 between Mang Giang Pass and An Kho was under continued maintenance and upgrading by the 70th Engr Bn (C).

The 299th Engr Bn (C) continued maintenance and repairs on Route 19 between Pleiku and Mang Giang Pass. A construction program for replacing bridges at BR261471 and BR228455 was developed but later turned over to the 45th Gp when the AOR was changed. ARVN Engr troops began removing the blown spans on the bridge at BR145534. Late in the reporting period the 70th Engr Bn (C) began replacing the superstructure on bridge BR096552.

The 20th Engr Bn (C) continued upgrading and maintenance of routes 19, between Dragon Mountain and Duc Co, and 14B - 509. At YL 962288 a second DD panel bridge was replaced when a VTR collapsed the existing panel bridge. Replacement of the tactical bridging with a permanent structure is in the design stage. Consideration has also been given to the replacement of the rapidly deteriorating concrete span at ZL076310.

Completion of a 2 span 78 ft steel stringer bridge at AR813501, on the East Pleiku bypass and the initiation of construction of a 60 ft LOC type I bridge at ZL232565 on Route 14N comprised the major contribution of ARVN Engr bridging effort during the reporting period. Material support and technical assistance was provided by Group units.

e. Training:

Despite the ever - increasing engineer work load, Group units continued to conduct mandatory unit and individual training. Special emphasis was placed on transition training and orientation for individual replacements arriving in Vietnam, individual and crew-served weapons firing for both familiarization and qualification, character guidance and command information.

f. Aviation:

The Group Aviation Platoon continued its mission of command transport, reconnaissance, liaison and resupply. The monsoon season, the

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majority of which occurred during the period covered by this report, did not have as great an impact on the aviation activities as expected. Very few missions had to be cancelled as a result of sub-marginal weather. Consequently, the programmed flying hours were met or exceeded by all flyable aircraft.

During the reporting period, several noteworthy occurrences transpired. First, all the aviation assets under the operational control of the Group were returned to an operation status. The U-6A was returned from an extensive radio retrofit program in mid-September and is now proving to be a valuable asset in the accomplishment of the Platoon's mission. The OH-23G was received from field maintenance the latter part of September after undergoing extensive repairs necessitated by a ground handling accident that occurred in early August. Since its return, the OH-23G has been used very effectively to provide command transport and reconnaissance to the 299th Engr Bn (C) in its forward area of operation. Second, the three aviators who arrived in late July completed an exhaustive orientation and are now fully qualified to perform under the conditions which prevail in this theater. Finally, the Group Aviation Platoon successfully completed its annual AGI and CMII. The inspection revealed that the Platoon is performing its mission in a superior manner.

5. LOGISTICS:

a. Supply:

(1) The supply of major end items designated as "critical items" by USMACV has generally improved. Of significant impact was the receipt of all authorized 5 ton dump trucks which materially improved the Group's haul capability. Of a total of 832 critical items authorized, 751 are on hand (90%). Of special note is the low availability of motorized graders (48 authorized, 38 on hand - 79%), scoop loaders (61 authorized, 34 on hand - 56%), and motorized rollers (7 authorized, 4 on hand - 57%). In addition, these items have proven difficult to maintain, a factor which further limits the horizontal construction capability of the Group. The shortage of semitrailers, low bed, 25 ton (109 authorized, 70 on hand - 64%) severely reduces the mobility of the Group and becomes critical when subordinate units are committed to widely scattered combat support missions.

(2) With the exception of electrical and plumbing materials, the Class IV construction supply situation continues to improve. Isolated shortages of cement and dimensioned timbers were quickly eliminated by coordinated unit pick-ups at the Qui Nhon depot utilizing organic vehicles. The heavy commitment of group units to combat support missions has reduced the requirements for common construction materials.

b. Maintenance:

During this period the maintenance management program has been revised considerably. At the request of USMACV, a 1st Logistical Command maintenance assistance team made thorough studies of the maintenance programs

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of all Group units. In accordance with their recommendations, PLL's, which had been consolidated at battalion level in the combat battalions, were established at company level. PLL clerks, not authorized by TOE, were selected and trained by the Group Maintenance Section, which presented a series of PLL orientation classes. Aggressive repair parts expediting has assisted in lowering the overall critical item deadline rate, however, the missions of subordinate units, which are engaged over widely-scattered, insecure terrain, continues to affect maintenance posture. Repair parts supply channels are not yet responsive to the demands of the heavy density of construction equipment in the Group.

c. Liaison Activities:

Since the local supply support depot does not have the capability of transporting vehicles and equipment for the port, a permanent liaison team has been established at Qui Nhon Support Command. This team has proven its value by expediting release orders on critically short items of equipment, and by assisting repair parts expeditors to locate and ship deadline repair parts.

6. Force Development:

No significant activities.

7. Command Management:

Activities covered in paragraphs 1 thru 5.

8. Inspector General:

Very few complaints or requests for assistance were received during this period.

9. Information:

USARV Command Information Topics and US Army Fact Sheets continue to be used as a basis for Command Information during the reporting period. Command Information Classes, short lectures, orientation of new arrivals, use of bulletins and bulletin boards, and publication of topics of general interest in the Group Daily Bulletin are considered adequate to disseminate information to all personnel. Group policy continues to be to review publications of general interest and to provide copies or extracts via the daily bulletin or separate bulletins when it is considered that the source documents have not received sufficient distribution. Newspapers such as the Stars and Stripes, Castle Courier, Army Times, and The Observer are widely distributed. In addition, an 8-page bi-monthly newspaper, the Frontier Courier, was initiated during this period. Four editions have gone to the press. This paper contains news items, a commander's column, a regular column on R&R facilities, and simple cartoons and line drawings. Although still in its infancy, this paper has received widespread attention. This newspaper is still in the developmental stage and new columns and possible revision of present format are being

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considered. During the period covered by this report, 1,313 home town news releases and 91 articles were processed by this headquarters. Approximately 175 photographs accompanied the various articles and home town news releases. Over 30 cover stories were written to support the home town news releases and over 30 daily news releases were telephoned into higher headquarters for publication in the MACV daily summary. Although hampered by requirements to clear all materials released prior to publication, and conflicting directives concerning releaseability of certain information, as well as inexperience on the part of battalion public information specialists, the public information program became increasingly more productive during this period, and an increase in both the number and the variety of stories submitted is expected in the future. Immediate plans are for a seminar for the public information specialists and increased assistance and materials are expected from the Armed Forces News Bureau.

10. Civic Affairs:

This period marked a period of transition for the civic action activities of this Group. While the "person-to-person" approach to civic actions continued to be a major source of assistance to the local populace and of detection and resolution of problems of which this Group could be of assistance, a formal program was initiated not only to provide civic action assistance but also to develop a mutually beneficial program of assistance and exchange of information. This program, organized by the Deputy Senior Advisor of II Corps, was nicknamed Operation "Tuong Tro", a Vietnamese term meaning "to help each other". Under this program the Group was assigned a civic action area of responsibility and operation within the Pleiku defensive perimeter. This area, a segment beginning at the Group Base Camp extending outward north and northwest for a distance of approximately ten kilometers was split up and assigned to the 70th and 815th Engineer Battalion, both of which have specific areas of responsibility. The primary and immediate objective of this program was to improve the defense posture of the Pleiku Area by winning friends in the area who discourage insurgents, counter adverse propaganda and provide early warning and other intelligence concerning possible attacks. Under this program which was begun formally at the end of the reporting period, early progress has been made in 6 villages, 2 of which are inhabited by Vietnamese and 4 of which are Montagnard Villages. At the end of the reporting period, this program, then in phase I of its operation, saw the daily activity of the Group Surgeon and the surgeons of the 70th and 815th in the Group area of responsibility. Construction projects were underway during the initial week in Le Chi while projects were planned in Plei Rong Dup and Plei Hol, all in the 815th's area of responsibility. The transition to a fully operational program, however, began before the formal program was put into effect. Representatives of the Group, working closely with the Pleiku Sector Advisor for Civic Action, made valuable contacts within the Pleiku Area. Engineer equipment and supplies were made available on a limited basis to other units in the Pleiku Area who were doing civic action and the Group thereby enabled greater progress to be made throughout the Pleiku complex than was heretofore possible. The most outstanding contribution along this line was the opening of the Kontum sandpit to all American trucks involved in civic action projects. Medical

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treatment ranging from first aid given by medics in forward areas to local nationals through medical evacuation by Group aircraft occur from time to time. The facilities of the medical aid station continue to be made available to local nationals employed by the Group units and both Vietnamese and Montagnard personnel are frequently treated by the Group dispensary. The Group Chaplains continue to provide liaison with the clergy parishes, churches, and temples and often provide candy and gifts donated by the various units to the children in the surrounding area. In at least one instance the services of the local clergy have been made available to US personnel when their areas of operation became so large that it could not be adequately covered by chaplains within the Group.

Specific civic action projects during this period include a widespread practice of providing the services of the welders of the 643d Engineer Company (Pipe Line) to villages along the route where the pipeline is being laid. A five-room brick schoolhouse at An Khe had almost been completed by the 70th Engr Bn before it moved to Pleiku in October. This project will be completed by the 45th Engineer Group which assumed responsibility for this operational area. A 32 foot by 16 foot concrete building was constructed by the 815th Engineer Battalion at Bien Ho Orphanage. The attractive building houses 20 children and is a permanent structure. Two well caps were constructed in Plei Ja Bruk Mongol by the 815th. In all three of these projects maximum utilization of Vietnamese labor was made. The 20th Engineer Battalion continued its highly successful friendship program in the villages of Plei Khoc Chut and Plei Brung south of Camp Enari where the 20th is located. Though the program had to be somewhat curtailed during the monsoon season because of the condition of the access road, the month of October has seen the civil affairs team at the 20th performing almost daily MEDCAP activities. The two villages are very friendly to the team, a result not only of the medical and construction help that the 20th has given the Montagnards but more basically because of a more personal friendship between the soldiers and the villagers. Donation of milk, cereal, and canned goods to the Bien Ho Orphanage, donation of clothing, food, and soap to the Montagnard Villages, introduction of modern sanitary practices and training in surrounding communities and immunization of whole Montagnard villages against plague, has continued to be a basic part of the civic actions program. In addition, one member of the Group has been welcomed into the Local Montagnard Tribe as a foster son of a Montagnard Village Chief.

Section 2. Part I. Observations (Lessons Learned)

None

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Section 2, Part II, Recommendations

None

R. C. Marshall

R. C. MARSHALL
Colonel, CE
Commanding

2 Inclosures

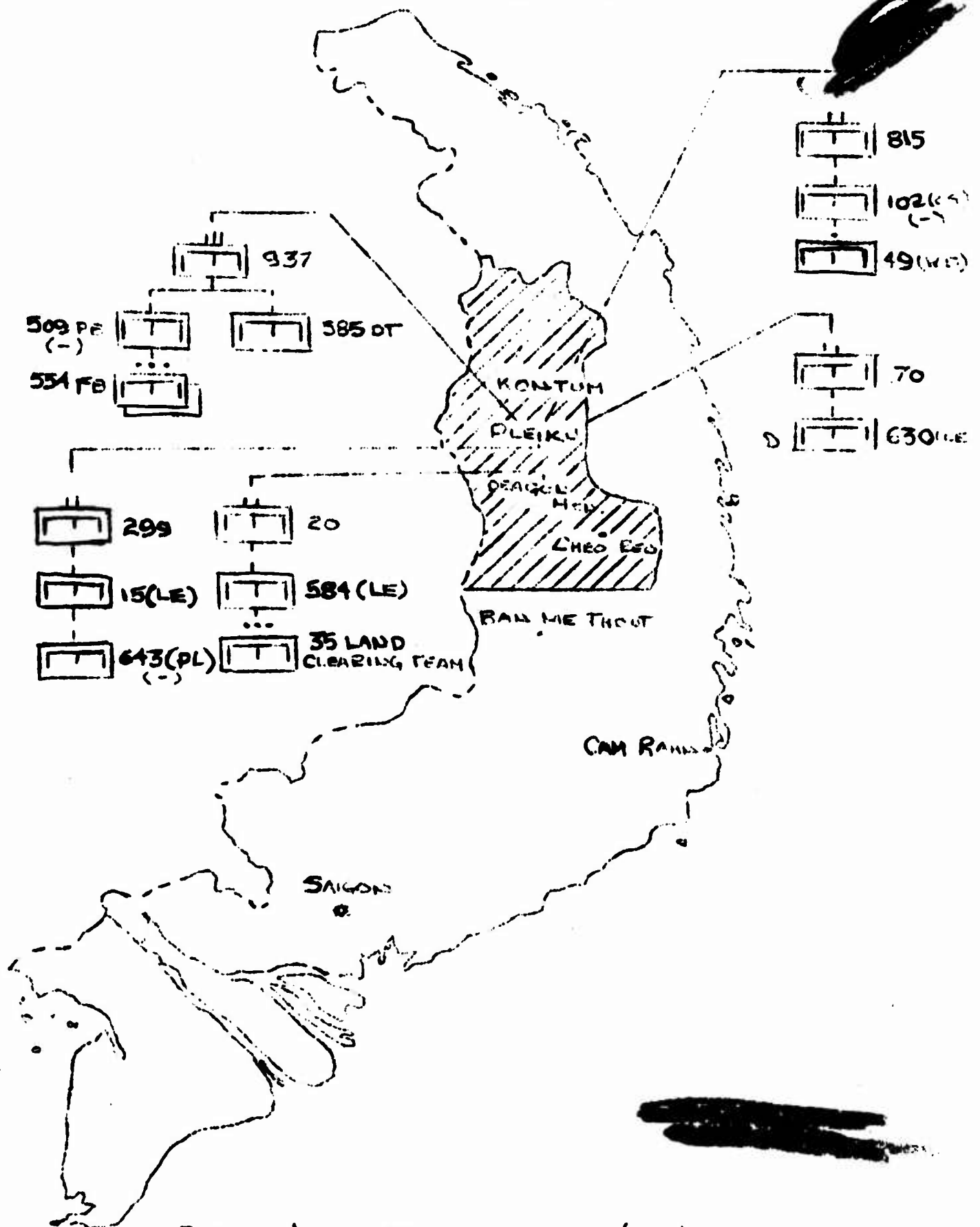
- 1 - 937th Engr Gp (C) Area of Responsibility
- 2 - Organization Chart

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- 6 - CG, USAF CV(P), ATTN: AVCC-P&O (Courier)
- 12 - CG, 18th Engr Bde, ATTN: AVBC-C (Courier)
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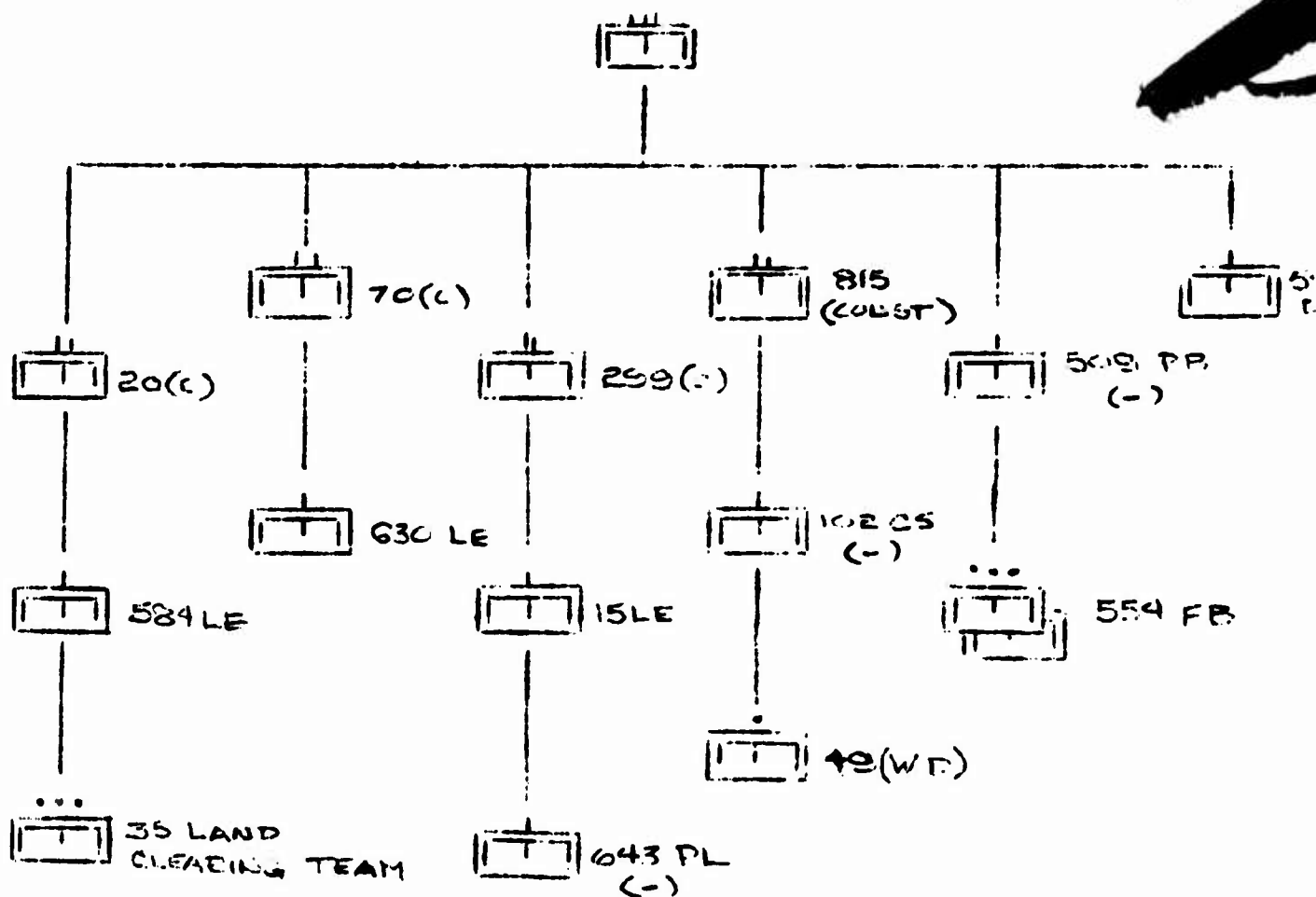
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AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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 ORGANIZATION CHART 937 ENGINEER GP (C)



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